THE

WORLD.

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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *Auguſt* the 16th, 1753.

IT has lain upon my conſcience for ſome time, that I have taken no notice of thoſe of my correſpondents, whoſe letters to me, for reaſons of ſtate, have been witheld from the public. Several of theſe gentlemen have favoured me with their aſſiſtance from the kindeſt motives. They have diſcovered that I am growing dull, and have therefore very generouſly ſent me ſome of their own wit, to reſtore me to reputation. But as I am not ſure of a conſtant ſupply of theſe brilliant epiſtles, I have been cautious of inſerting them; knowing that when once a bottle of claret is ſet upon the table, people are apt to make faces at plain port.

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THERE are other gentlemen to whom I am no leſs obliged. Theſe have taken it for granted, that as I declared in my firſt paper againſt medling with religion, I muſt certainly be an infidel: upon which ſuppoſition they have been pleaſed to ſhower in upon me, what they call, their FREE THOUGHTS: but theſe thoughts, as I have hitherto given no aſſurances of my infidelity, are rather too FREE for this paper. And beſides, as I have always endeavoured to be new, I cannot conſent to publiſh any thing ſo common as abuſe upon religion.

BUT the majority of theſe my private correſpondents are politicians. They approve, they tell me, of my neutrality at firſt; but matters have been ſo managed lately by thoſe in power, that it is the part of every honeſt man to become an oppoſer. The compliments which theſe gentlemen are pleaſed to pay my abilities are the higheſt ſatisfaction to me. Their letters do me the honour to aſſure me, that if I will but exert myſelf, the miniſtry muſt do exactly as I would have them; and that the next general election will certainly take whatever turn I have a mind to give it.

I AM very far from denying that I have all this conſequence; but I have always been of opinion that it is greater to ſave than to deſtroy: for which reaſon I am willing to continue the preſent adminiſtration a little longer: though at the ſame time I muſt take the liberty of declaring, that if I find the popular clamours againſt a late act of parliament to be true; namely, that it will entirely defeat all the prophecies relating to the diſperſion of the jews; or that the new teſtament is to be thrown out of our bibles and common prayer books; or that a general circumciſion is certainly to take place ſoon after the meeting of the new parliament; I ſay,

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when theſe things are ſo, I ſhall moſt aſſuredly exert myſelf as becomes a true-born Engliſhman.

I CONFESS very freely that I had conceived ſome diſlike to the marriage bill; having been aſſured by the maid ſervant where I lodge, that after the 25th day of next march, no young woman could be married without taking her bible oath that ſhe was worth fifty pounds. But as I have read the bill ſince, and have found no ſuch clauſe in it, I am tolerably well ſatisfied.

To thoſe of my correſpondents who are angry with me for not having endeavoured to inculcate ſome ſerious moral in every one of theſe papers, I ſhall juſt take notice, that I am writing eſſays and not ſermons. But though I do not avowedly once a week attack envy, malice and uncharitableneſs, I hope that a paper now and then written with pleaſantry and good-humour, though it ſhould have no direct moral in view, may ſo amuſe and temper the mind, as to guard it againſt the approaches of thoſe tormenting paſſions. There is nothing truer than that bad ſpirits and ill-humour are the parents of miſery and miſchief; he therefore who can lead the imagination from gloom and vapours to objects of chearfulneſs and mirth, is a uſeful member of ſociety.

HAVING now diſcharged my conſcience of its burthen, I ſhall cloſe this paper with a letter which I received yeſterday by the penny poſt. I inſert it here to ſhew that a late very ſerious eſſay of mine, calculated for the ſupport and delight of ladies in years, has done real harm; while others of a gayer nature, and without a moral, have been perfectly inoffenſive.

To

To Mr. Fitz-Adam.

Sir,

That you have been the occaſion of miſery to an innocent woman is as true, as that I hope I may acquit you of any evil intention: you have indeed miſled me, but it is another who has wronged me. Yet if I had not uſed my utmoſt endeavours, and practiced every honeſt art to get redreſs from this unjuſt perſon, I ſhould neither deſire nor deſerve a place in your paper.

But, alas, ſir! while I am prefacing my ſad ſtory, through a too modeſt reluctance to begin it, I am fearful that you will miſtake me for ſome credulous young creature who has yielded up her honour to betraying man. Indeed, Mr. Fitz-Adam, I am no ſuch perſon; being at preſent in my fifty-ſixth year, and having always entertained ſuch an averſion to impurity, as to be ready to die with ſhame even of my very dreams, when they have ſometimes happened to tend that way. But how has my virtue been rewarded!—I will conceal nothing from you, ſir, though my cheeks are glowing with ſhame as well as indignation——I am wronged, barbarouſly wronged, and will complain.

The hand that is now penning this letter was three tedious weeks ago given at the altar to the moſt unworthy of men——Forgive me, ſir, a moment's pauſe—I cannot think of what I am, without exclaiming in the bitterneſs of my heart, how cruelly am I diſappointed! I will be particular in my relation.

My father was a country gentleman of a good eſtate, which by his death that happened near two months ago, devolved to me, as his only child. It was matter of wonder to our neighbours, that a perſon ſo agreeable as I was thought to be, and who had been marriageable

a good while (for as I mentioned before, I am in my fifty-ſixth year) ſhould be ſuffered to live ſingle to ſo ripe an age. To ſay the truth, I could never account for this wonder, any otherwiſe than from that exceſs of delicacy which I always obſerved in my converſation with the men, and which in all probability prevented them from declaring themſelves.

As ſoon as I had performed the laſt duties to my father, I came up to town, and took lodgings in Bury ſtreet.——Would it had been in Pall-mall, or a ſtreet ſtill wider! for then I might have eſcaped the obſervation of a tall well-made gentleman from Ireland, who unfortunately for my peace, lodged directly over the way.

I WILL not trouble you with the methods he took from his window to engage my attention, or with what paſſed between us on his being permitted to viſit me. All I ſhall ſay is, that whatever ground he had gained in my heart, it might have proved a difficult taſk for him to have carried me without a ſettlement, if the WORLD of july the 12th upon the love of ELDERLY women had not fallen into my hands. Before the reading of that fatal paper I had ſuſpicions that my perſon might poſſibly be leſs deſirable than my fortune; but now I believed, and my wiſhes aſſiſted my belief, that he languiſhed to poſſeſs me. I read the ſtory of NINON L'ENCLOS above a dozen times over; and I rejoiced to find myſelf of the exact age of that lady, when her charms had ſuch an aſcendancy over the unfortunate DE VILLIERS.

MY lover found me with the paper in my hand. I read it to him; and he confirmed me in my opinion, by wiſhing himſelf the abbè GEDOIN, and his angel, as

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